

America

NATIONAL CATHOLIC WEEKLY REVIEW

April 16, 1955
Vol. 93 Number 3

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**Christian culture in
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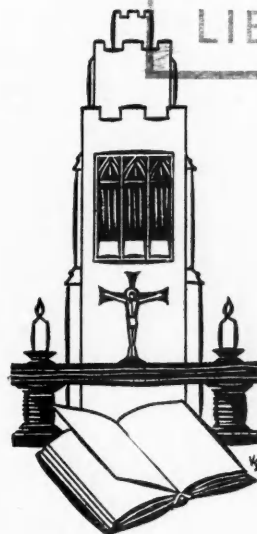
W. F. CUNNINGHAM C. S. C.

The Dawson challenge: a discussion

JAMES M. CAMPBELL • ROBERT C. HARTNETT

The liberal arts: a plan of action

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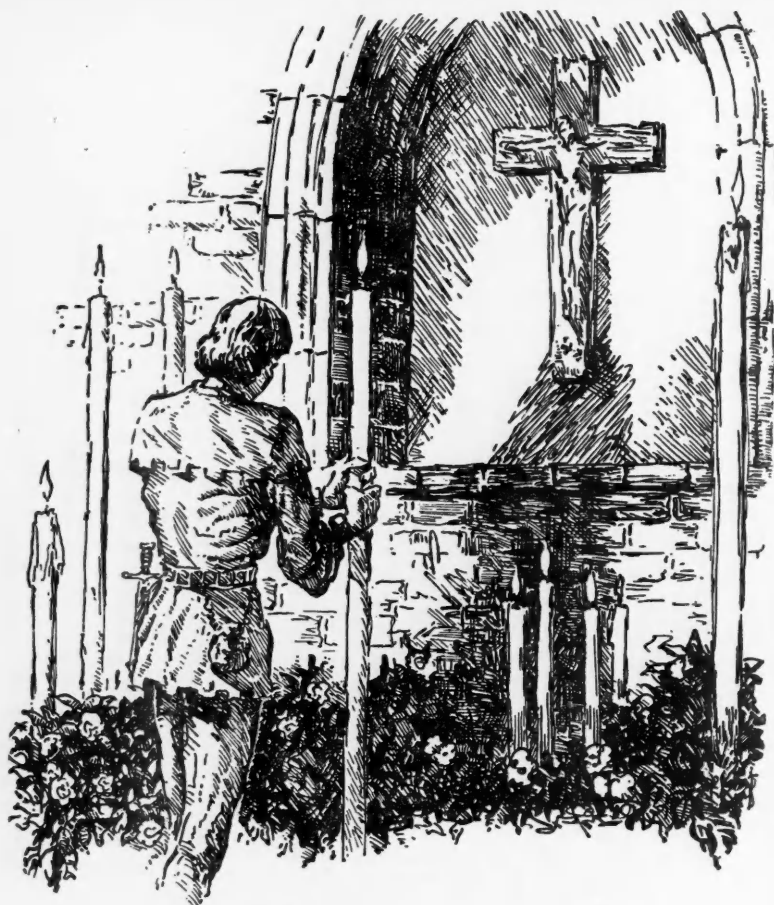


EDITORIALS: Winston Churchill's achievement

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ANNUAL CONVENTION ISSUE



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AMERICA. Published weekly by the America Press at 116 Main Street, Norwalk, Conn. Executive Office, 70 East 45th Street, New York 17, N. Y., April 16, 1955, Vol. XCIII, No. 3, Whole No. 2396, Telephone MUrray Hill 6-5750. Cable address: Cathreview, N. Y. Domestic, yearly, \$7; 20 cents a copy. Canada, \$8; 20 cents a copy. Foreign, \$8.50; 20 cents a copy. Entered as second-class matter April 17, 1951 at the Post Office at Norwalk, Conn., under the act of March 8, 1879. AMERICA, National Catholic Weekly Review. Registered U. S. Patent Office.



Parish schools "break" 3 million

Sometimes a prize is given the millionth driver over a new bridge. If one had been planned for the 3 millionth child to enrol in a U. S. Catholic grade school, the time to give it would have been last fall. That was when Catholic school enrolment topped its 1953 mark of 2,956,006 children and went on to a new mark of 3,185,238. The Archdiocese of Chicago led the country by enrolling 217,289 pupils, with Brooklyn (178,205) second. In 3 more years enrolments in Catholic elementary schools will have an estimated 3,800,000 pupils. These are the corrected figures given in an NC news release about the new booklet, *Catholic Elementary Schools—Their Growth and Future*, readied by NCWC's Department of Education in time for distribution at the Easter Week convention of the National Catholic Educational Association in Atlantic City. The 72,283 teachers in Catholic grade schools represents an increase of 73.8 per cent in the last 30 years, during which, according to NCWC's figures, the number of pupils rose 75.4 per cent. The present 9,276 Catholic elementary schools are 41.6 per cent more than we had a generation ago. Our schools are now bulging in the lower grades, with 5 first-graders for every 3 eighth-graders. The 9-classroom parochial school of 1954-55 will have to become a 16-classroom school by 1964 to keep up with the expanding enrolments. One out of every 8 full-time teachers is now a lay person. We shall need many more such auxiliaries of Catholic action in our classrooms.

... enrolment plateau of 1925-45

Our impression was that there were 2 million children in Catholic grade schools ever since we could remember. How, then, could a 75.4-per cent increase be ascribed to the last 30 years? The *Catholic Directory* for 1925 shows 2,038,624 "children attending" next to the column "parishes with schools." The peak peak came in 1931, with 2,283,084 children. We are still trying to find out what these figures mean.

Federal aid to libraries

When the National Book Committee, a citizen's group "devoted to the wiser and wider distribution and use of books," was formed last June, George N. Shuster, president of Hunter College and chairman of the organizing committee, made public some startling figures on how books do not circulate in this highly literate land. Though we have 7,500 public-library systems, 30 million people are still completely without library facilities and 53 million do not have easy access to books through libraries. One out of every six of the country's 3,000 counties has no public-library service. Only seven States in 1950 showed a public-library expenditure of \$1.25 and over per capita. The American Library Association estimates the cost of minimum service at \$1.50 per capita. Efforts are now being made to fill this vast gap. A Library Service bill (S. 205), has been intro-

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duced in Congress, providing an appropriation to the States of \$7.5 million annually for a five-year period. To get payments a State must submit to and have approved by the U. S. Commissioner of Education a plan for extending public-library service to areas that now have either inadequate service or none at all. The bill is bipartisan, is sponsored by 13 Senators and 26 Representatives, and has the support of 17 national organizations. Hearings will soon begin in the House Education and Labor Committee, under the chairmanship of Rep. Graham Barden of North Carolina. Citizens living in areas where public-library facilities are inadequate or nonexistent, especially teachers, may like to express to the House committee their approval of the bill.

Married teen-agers

According to the U. S. Bureau of Statistics, there were in April, 1953 in this country, 884,000 teen-age wives and 164,000 teen-age husbands. If we assume that the wives of the male teen-agers were likely to be teen-agers too, that would leave about 700,000 teen-age girls married to men who at that date were out of their teens. The statistics do not reveal how many of the husbands of these latter were teen-agers at the time of their marriage. At any rate the figure of over 1 million married teen-agers prompts the question of the success of such marriages. Lester A. Kirkendall, associate professor of family life education at Oregon State College, recently cited a national survey which showed that some 3 per cent of students in grades 10 through 12 were married. He believes that many of these marriages are headed for the rocks because of the immaturity of one or both parties. Just how young is too young for successful marriage? There is no pat answer. Rev. John L. Thomas, S.J., in "The Problem of 'Forced' Marriages," (*Social Order*, March, 1954) has pointed out that maturity is not necessarily related to age. The conventional age for marriage varies according to culture, race and social class. In contemporary American culture, however, the hazards of teen-age marriage seem great. In his study of 368 broken marriages in which pregnancy had occurred before marriage, Fr. Thomas found that well over half of the husbands were 21 or younger and well over half of the wives were in their teens. More such studies are needed. In the meantime, youth and

student counselors should think twice before recommending teen-age marriages.

Young fella, walk—or wither

If the family doctors assembled at the seventh annual meeting of the American Academy of General Practice in Los Angeles on March 31 took the words of two noted athletic coaches seriously, the U. S. auto industry is soon going to have a bone to pick with the physicians. The coaches told the doctors that U. S. youth is getting softer and softer because they are forgetting how to walk. Lynn Waldorf, University of California football coach, and Eddie Wojceki, head trainer of the 1952 U. S. Olympic team, declared that the decline of the noble recreation of hiking, the universal habit of jumping into the jalopy to go two blocks, and general limb-lethargy among young people have already produced "conspicuous changes in their physiques." Only a few years ago, the coaches asserted, standard football practice included "duck-waddle" exercises and deep knee-bends to *loosen up* the knee and leg muscles. Nowadays what is needed is "bucking-machine" drills and stair-climbing sessions to *strengthen* leg muscles. The experts urged the doctors to warn U. S. youth that if they did not walk more they would wither. Whatever has happened to the old hikes out into the country, to family chestnutting and berry-picking, wherein legs worked hard so that head and heart could the better relax? There's lots of fun and health to be found afoot—and we aver it with nary a hint from the shoe industry. So, since it's a nice spring day today along New York's Riverside Drive . . . (Oh, it's *youth* they're worried about, so we're in the clear.)

Respect for the police

Police Commissioner Francis W. H. Adams of New York City recently had some strong words to say at a Communion breakfast. His words are of prime interest, of course, to New Yorkers, but the problem they point up is one to be pondered by every citizen, especially every parent, in the United States. "The time has come," said Mr. Adams, "in fact, it's long past due," for an "aggressive attitude" to counteract the impulse which causes all too many people to "jeer at, resent and disregard" the police, who are in real-

ity "doing a great, a magnificent and selfless job." This depreciatory attitude betrays a lack of proper respect for legitimate authority. Moreover, it notably impairs the efficiency of the police force:

It never occurs to the public that they affect the morale of the Police Department. If the public saw to it that the policemen were supported individually, in everyday life, the morale of the men would be greatly improved . . . It is the duty of the citizen to see that all is done to build up respect for the police.

The dumb or brutal or crooked cop has for too long been a fairly standard character in books and comics, in the movies, on radio and on TV. Because of the harm done, it would be foolish to allow such caricatures to undermine respect for law as embodied in the policeman on the beat or in the squad car. It is doubly dangerous to allow youngsters to think and act as though the policeman is the guy to be gyped, the natural enemy to be tricked, the tyrant to be hated. "Cop-hatred" is often an early signpost on the road to delinquency.

Changing role of clergymen

Protestant ministers, graduates of five major theological seminaries across the country, were asked to delineate their apostolate in questionnaires sent them by Dr. Samuel W. Blizzard, a Presbyterian clergyman who is also associate professor of sociology at Pennsylvania State University. With the support of the Russell Sage Foundation and the Union Theological Seminary of New York, Dr. Blizzard last year began a survey that reveals the waning role of the pulpit in American Protestantism. Among its ministers, preaching is being "relegated to a less important position, and the roles of pastor, counselor, organizer, administrator and promoter are coming to occupy the resulting void." The typical day of a Protestant minister as disclosed by the survey is marked by the steady pressure of correspondence, telephone calls, parish business, hospital rounds, private counseling, study groups and civic functions, leaving all too little time for private reading and family life. What ultimate effect this trend will have on religious belief and practice among Protestants would be hard to judge. Certainly, bringing religion into close contact with people in their everyday lives is a strong and necessary challenge to secularism. The trend toward a greater social involvement of religion is not, however, without its dangers. Should social welfare become a substitute for religion and the man of God give place to the psychologist and the social worker, the damage would be irreparable. It would be a poor bargain that bartered eternal goods for temporal gain.

Secular institutes for women

Single women who desire to dedicate their lives to God in union with others and yet remain in lay life indistinguishable in garb from other Catholics may not have noted two pertinent Comments in this Review

AMERICA—National Catholic Weekly Review—Edited and published by the following Jesuit Fathers of the United States:

Editor-in-Chief: ROBERT C. HARTNETT

Managing Editor: CHARLES KEENAN

Literary Editor: HAROLD C. GARDINER

Associate Editors: JOHN LAFARGE, BENJAMIN L. MASSE, VINCENT S. KEARNEY, GORDON GEORGE, ROBERT A. GRAHAM, THURSTON N. DAVIS

Contributing Editors: ALLAN P. FARRELL, WILFRID PARSONS
Editorial Office: 329 W. 108TH STREET, NEW YORK 25, N. Y.

Business Office: 70 EAST 45TH STREET, NEW YORK 17, N. Y.

Business Manager and Treasurer: JOSEPH F. MACFARLANE

Circulation Manager: PATRICK H. COLLINS

Advertising Manager: MISS JANE VLYMEN

during the past year (7/17/54 and 4/9/55). The topic of both was secular institutes. Since God's call to this form of consecrated lay life is heard frequently these days, we call attention to one particular institute among many, the "Caritas Christi" (Love of Christ) Union. The union was founded in France in 1937. Today it has members in nine countries, including the United States. It is an institute of "pontifical right," that is, it enjoys the full approbation of the Holy See. What do its members do? They must remain laywomen, since the lay state is an essential part of their vocation. They keep their jobs or professions in the world and receive their training as members of the union in such a way as not to disrupt their secular obligations. The work to which Divine Providence has already assigned them is regarded as an integral part of their new dedication. After a suitable period of preparation, they take private vows of perfect chastity and promises of poverty and obedience according to the constitutions of the union. The ideal which the union holds up to its members is that of an apostolate which corresponds as perfectly as possible to the circumstances, the mentality and the needs of our times. Inquiries should be addressed to Union "Caritas Christi," 19, rue de Varenne, Paris VII.

Pro-Red circular of Czech and Slovak bishops

It is unusual, to say the least, for Catholic bishops to address Communist propaganda to the Holy Father and even more unusual for the Vatican to take public cognizance of such an act. Yet this recently happened. The episode reflects the desperate as well as dramatic struggle for existence forced upon the Church behind the Iron Curtain. Last November bishops and priests in France, Germany and Italy were surprised to receive from Czechoslovakia a circular letter protesting the rearmament of West Germany. Unmistakably part of the Communist campaign to prevent Germany's admission to Nato, this communication was subscribed to by 16 Catholic ecclesiastics, including five bishops. A copy was also sent to the Pope, with a covering letter signed by two bishops, Most Rev. Joseph Carsky, apostolic administrator of Kosice in Slovakia, and Most Rev. Moric Picha, 85-year-old head of the Bohemian diocese of Hradec Kralove. These two prelates were among the four who startled the free world in March, 1951, by taking an oath of allegiance to the Red regime, shortly after the forced removal of Archbishop Joseph Beran of Prague. The Vatican radio has now broadcast the text of the reply to the November circular sent in the name of His Holiness by the pro-Secretary of State, Msgr. Domenico Tardini. The fact that the Vatican addresses these bishops by name shows that the two prelates are, canonically, still in good standing. The Pope does not judge them. Yet there is no doubt about the humiliating nature of their position. Christians in the free world should regard with understanding this latest evidence of the frightful dilemma faced by shepherds of souls behind the Iron Curtain.

THE THEOLOGY OF WORK

Most men work for their daily bread, but they work for other reasons too. The *American Sociological Review* for April carries a study by Nancy C. Morse and Robert S. Weiss, "The Function and Meaning of Work and the Job," which shows that even if there were no economic necessity for men to work, most men would work anyway.

To the typical man in a middle-class occupation working means having a purpose, gaining a sense of accomplishment, expressing himself. He feels that not working would leave him aimless and without opportunities to contribute.

Besides its sociological dimensions, work has an important role in the divine plan of redemption. Rev. H. Rondet, S.J., outlines this redemptive role of work in two admirable articles in the *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* for January and February, entitled "Eléments pour une théologie du travail."

God placed man in the world as a free agent to complete His work of creation. The world is unfinished. Man is the intelligent mediator through whom the latent perfections of the universe are brought to fruition and offered back to God. In perfecting the universe man also molds himself, develops his talents and freely lays the foundations for the building up of his supernatural life of grace.

Even if sin had never entered the world, work would have been necessary for man in this sublime vocation. Original sin did not make work necessary. It made work hard. According to the theologians, sin caused the loss of a free gift of God that would have made labor a continuing joy. Now man without this gift faces the hard struggle with nature, a struggle that is made more painful by the individual and collective selfishness of men.

Whenever work is dominated by the will to power or greed for profits, when it loses sight of its primary function to perfect man and the universe, it becomes inhuman. The pain in work, from being a salutary penance in the redemptive plan becomes a manmade influence that brutalizes. Recall the sad complaint of Pius XI in *Quadragesimo Anno* that dead matter is improved in the factory while men are often corrupted.

In the divine plan, says Père Rondet, charity should be at once a driving force and a curb in economic activity.

Building bridges, creating laboratories, making roads, developing radio and television, which draw men together, make the earth a single great mansion. This is not a diabolical work but a work properly human and Christian.

The rulers of Soviet Russia have created a *mystique* of work that finds a place for voluntary sacrifice to achieve the ideal of a paradise on earth. The true Christian associates his work with the sacrifice of Christ. In his charity he is an inventor and a technician eager to free the slaves of modern times. If his work is a necessity of nature and a penalty for sin, it is also a means of redemption.

G. G.

"Realizing Our Philosophy of Education"

Something like 11,000 Catholic teachers, supervisors and administrators are expected to attend the 52nd Annual Convention of the National Catholic Educational Association, to be held in Atlantic City Tuesday through Friday of Easter Week. At first sight you wonder where 11,000 delegates could come from. But as soon as you break down the figures on Catholic educational institutions in the United States—including the small totals represented by the Eastern Rite, the Vicariate of Alaska and the dioceses of Juneau and Honolulu—the mystery disappears.

Just take seminaries. Last year we had 76 diocesan seminaries (a jump from 55 ten years earlier) and 378 religious seminaries or scholasticates. Besides the 8,804 students in diocesan seminaries, 6,244 more were being trained in other institutions. Religious seminarians totaled 18,400. Altogether, this made a total of 33,448. The Seminary Department of NCEA is divided into Major and Minor, plus a Vocation Section. So hundreds of delegates must convene from seminaries alone.

The base of the pyramid of Catholic education in the United States, the elementary-school system, is extremely broad. Last year we had 8,493 parish and 541 private schools at this level. That totaled over 9,000 grade schools from which to draw delegates. We also had 1,536 diocesan and parochial high schools, and another 830 under private auspices. That made a total of 2,366 secondary schools to draw from. The 250 colleges and universities, especially the latter, could be expected to average several delegates each.

Even these figures do not exhaust the scope of the NCEA. Ignoring increases since last year, we had 131 dioceses and archdioceses, each with a diocesan superintendent of schools. The School Superintendents, having common interests and problems, have their own NCEA Department. Then there is a Special Education Department dealing with all manner of special students, from those who require unusual attention in reading to those who are afflicted with multiple and severe handicaps. It is encouraging to see that the convention program of this department, which evokes the most Christlike charity of any form of Catholic education, is continually expanding.

The Seminary Committee of the National Center of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, the Catholic Audio-Visual Educators, the Commission on Adult Education and (among others) school architects also meet as part of the NCEA program. The Elementary School Supervisors, too, have a special conference.

The very multiplicity of forms which Catholic education takes in America points up the importance of this year's theme: "Realizing Our Philosophy of Education." Catholic educators keep constant watch lest the bigger and more many-sided their enterprises become, the less clearly they implement the central

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purposes of religious education. This year's NCEA convention is set up, even more than it usually is, as a professional examination of conscience.

Early last March the University of Notre Dame sponsored a special Conference of Deans of Catholic Liberal Arts Colleges to consider the question of "Christian culture," to which this issue of *AMERICA* is devoted. Two noteworthy attitudes characterized the discussions: a ceaseless desire to improve and a will to define progress in terms of basic purposes.

American Catholics can rest assured that these same healthy attitudes pervade our entire system. It is therefore in good hands and should constantly get better as it gets bigger.

Winston Churchill: man of monumental achievement

When Sir Winston Churchill at long last laid aside the burdens of state on April 5, the free world knew that a historic era had quietly lowered its banner forever. It was well remarked that even this Titan, who bowed to neither Hitler's bombs nor the cold-war's crushing burdens, could not escape the slow erosion of his accumulating years. At 80 he deserves the tributes which customarily remain unspoken until a deeply admired notable has for the last time closed his eyes to the world on which he left his mark.

Gauged by absolute standards, of course, Winston Churchill has evidenced his share of human limitations. But, especially at this hour, it would be ungenerous (which he never was), not to say presumptuous (was he ever that, either?), to indulge the human propensity of cutting one's fellows down to size.

Let us rather focus on his positive achievements as an exemplar of what a man richly endowed by God with capacities of truly heroic proportions can accomplish, provided he spends his energies at a rate commensurate with his powers.

The mere headings identifying Churchill's occupations (mostly political), literary productions and honors in the British *Who's Who* run nearly two full columns. For almost a half-century all told (16 years as a Liberal, the rest, both before and after 1906-22, as a Conservative) he has served in the House of Commons. He so profoundly cherishes the House and all it stands for that, being offered a dukedom by Queen Elizabeth, he preferred to continue as a "back-bencher." Perhaps nothing reveals the core of Churchill

as a public figure so clearly as what he said in secret session on September 17, 1940:

Now I am first of all a Parliamentarian and House of Commons man. If I have any say in matters at the present time, it is due mainly to this House, and I therefore set Parliamentary duties above everything, subject, of course, to the leave of the House . . . (Winston Churchill's *Secret Sessions Speeches*, New York, Simon and Schuster, 1946, pp. 19-20. With permission.)

Parliamentary statesmanship of Churchillian quality requires more subordination of self than we are likely to have credited to Sir Winston.

Churchill, in fact, must be counted among the great men of history whose very greatness enabled them judiciously to appraise human limitations and to be grateful for any success in surmounting them:

. . . We are really doing our very best. There are no doubt many shortcomings. A lot of things are done none too well. Some things that ought to be done have not yet been done. Some things have been done that had better have been left undone. But . . . the way in which our system of government and society is standing up . . . has justly commanded the wonder and admiration of every friendly nation in the world (*ibid.*, p. 20).

Passing over his intermittent Cabinet services over a period of nearly 50 years, his 25 volumes of majestic prose and ten volumes of eloquent speeches, let us fasten on this one sign of his caliber: his acceptance of the world in which God had placed him. He has never, in Augustine's devastating phrase, "aped God." Witness his appeal to the House to accept our alliance with Darlan: "The Almighty in His infinite wisdom did not see fit to create Frenchmen in the image of Englishmen" (*ibid.*, p. 98). To have combined the well-reasoned courage by which he heartened his people in 1940 with such almost loamy at-homeness with our "human condition" is a sign of a moral magnitude few statesmen have equaled.

Exorbitance of Mr. Nehru

Prime Minister Nehru's recent blast at the Western powers makes it increasingly difficult to give India the sympathetic ear she otherwise deserves as a nation of prestige in Asia. Before Parliament on March 31 he denounced the Western policy of seeking military alliances against communism as that policy is now being pursued in every corner of the globe. Mr. Nehru's reaction is not new, but this time he has become plainly exorbitant in his criticism.

No one with a minimum appreciation of India's problems will denounce her policy of "neutralism" as being completely blind. Her refusal to take sides in the Asian cold war is not the product of ignorance of the danger of communism. It is rather a product of circumstances. Her pressing needs are economic. She cannot afford to divert her resources toward the building up of a military machine while her countless millions go hungry. That India should be tempted to

rely wholly on the possibility of peaceful coexistence is therefore understandable.

The European powers and the United States, however, have every right to object to Mr. Nehru's scathing criticism of their policy in Europe. Every nation in the West is as devoted to the ideal of disarmament as is India's Prime Minister. Acknowledging Mr. Nehru's right to find fault with "Western talk of disarmament while rearming Germany," we would still appreciate some suggestion for a substitute. *Satyagraha*—the Gandhian doctrine of non-violence and passive resistance which won India her independence—is not going to hold off the military juggernaut which overshadows the still free nations of Europe.

As for "interference" in the internal affairs of other countries, even Mr. Nehru acts as though it were sometimes advisable. We sympathize, for example, with his concern over "racism" in South Africa. Such concern is nevertheless, interference.

There is more at stake than a basic difference of opinion about the best way to meet the Communist threat. The right of nations to determine their own foreign policies—a right Mr. Nehru has insistently proclaimed for his own country—is also involved. It might be well to remind the Prime Minister that no nation in either Europe or Asia has been dragooned into a security pact with the United States. Moscow and Peiping set the stage.

Quemoy-Matsu quandary

After all is said and done, anything or nothing may happen on China's offshore islands during the next two months, the season best suited for a Communist invasion attempt. Under the circumstances the Administration has probably adopted the best policy possible as it continues to play Quemoy and Matsu by ear. These two island groups, no more than "pin points" on the globe, have us in as neat a quandary as American foreign policy has ever faced.

In themselves the islands are probably not essential to the defense of Formosa. The decision whether to keep them in Chinese Nationalist hands or to allow them to go by default, however, cannot be made on this basis alone. It may be worth while, therefore, to tot up the balance sheet for and against committing ourselves to the defense of the islands.

Quemoy does have a certain strategic defensive value. It controls shipping in Amoy harbor and therefore the flow of aviation fuel into an area devoid of inland communications. If, as U. S. military strategists maintain, no attack on the offshore islands or on Formosa itself can hope to succeed without local air superiority, Quemoy is an asset to Chiang Kai-shek.

Moreover, the United States cannot allow these islands to fall into Communist hands without risking further loss of prestige throughout Asia. Their continued possession by Chiang Kai-shek serves as a morale-booster for his regime on Formosa. Their loss

could mean the eventual destruction of his Government by subversion and a shattering blow to the United States among our Seato allies in Asia.

On the other hand, involvement in the defense of these islands could cost us a loss of prestige in other areas of Asia where it matters just as much. These islands are Chinese territory. American involvement in the Chinese civil war would suit Peiping's propaganda machine. The uncommitted nations of the continent, such as India, Burma and Indonesia, are more than a little susceptible to hullabaloo about "Wall Street imperialism." It is no secret that our heavily military way of dealing with communism has them worried.

Then again, there is the real danger that an attempt to hold Quemoy and Matsu by force will spark the atomic war we have been trying to avoid. This is what our European allies live in dread of. If we show ourselves prepared to work out a "deal" whereby Chiang withdrew from the islands and Mao agreed not to attack Formosa (a very unlikely compliance, it is true), our allies would more probably fall in line with us to defend Formosa.

There are days ahead of frightful decision which may lead us into another war. We do not pretend to know whether or not that decision should be taken on the issue of the offshore islands. In the final analysis it is for the President to decide.

There is one stubborn consideration, however, of which we cannot lose sight. By now we and our allies should know that there is no "give and take" when dealing with communism. One concession only leads to another demand. So it was in Korea, then in Indochina. Next the Tachens were yielded, over the protests of Chiang Kai-shek, as nonessential to the defense of Formosa. What good has come of all these concessions? Red China is now more truculent than ever.

The impression of Communist invincibility, as contrasted with free-world "pushability," is beginning to snowball throughout Asia. We cannot allow that impression to keep growing, no matter what India and the neutralist bloc, or even Western Europe, may think of our fears.

In the meantime we can only ask God's guidance for the President, who thus far has pursued, we believe, a very judicious course on the islands.

God in our schools

The Board of Regents of the State of New York took a long look at the public schools and decided it was time to speak out again on the subject of secularism. What this distinguished and influential group said March 28 was summed up in the elongated title of their statement: "Fundamental Beliefs, Liberty Under God, Respect for the Dignity and Rights of Each Individual, Devotion to Freedom, the Brotherhood of Man under the Fatherhood of God."

This is not the first time the New York Regents

have tried to alert the people of the Empire State to the creeping peril of godlessness in the schools. On November 30, 1951 they recommended that in every public school in the State the day begin with a brief prayer as part of a program to stress the moral and spiritual heritage of our country. Of the 900 school boards in the State, according to an informed estimate of the State Department of Education in Albany, only about 150 have adopted this proposal.

We can't avoid the impression that the phrase, "moral and spiritual values," as used by some of today's educators, are weasel words which sound more impressive than the ideas they front for. Actually, they commit the schools and their administrators to nothing more than a vague adherence to democracy, freedom and fair play. Many who use this formula employ it as a studied, secularistic substitute for God-centered values.

There is nothing equivocal, however, about the meaning the Regents attach to this phrase when they recommend

... the development of moral and spiritual values through all the activities and lessons of the school day and particularly by the good example of the school staff.

We know this because they recommend the frequent and intensive study of the fundamental documents of our American tradition. These, they say, provide

... an understanding and appreciation of his role as an individual endowed by his Creator with inalienable rights and as a member of a group similarly endowed; of respect for others, particularly parents and teachers, of devotion to freedom and of reverence for Almighty God.

Thus, they declare, the schools will "fulfil their high function of supplementing the training of the home" and will intensify in the child "that love for God, for parents and for home" which is a mark of true character-training and a firm support of the nation's welfare.

It is instructive to compare the Regents' statement with an article on "Conscience and the Undergraduate," in the *Atlantic Monthly* for April. The author, John Sloan Dickey, president of Dartmouth College since 1945, faces the problem of the religious training of college men. The old "constitutional" guarantees of religion in higher education, he admits, have become "outmoded agencies." There were three of these: a tradition of preacher-presidents, a curriculum "heavy with religion and moral doctrine" and compulsory chapel. The only substitute for them which Dartmouth's Board of Trustees could find was in affirming that the college's moral and spiritual purpose "springs from a belief in the existence of good and evil," as well as from faith in man's ability to choose between them and his duty to advance the good.

Dartmouth's inability to affirm the existence of God sounds like religious bankruptcy. The Regents, however, refuse to accept it in New York State.

Christian culture in general education

W. F. Cunningham, C.S.C.

CATHOLIC HIGHER EDUCATION in the United States today faces a new challenge to become more than ever what it professes to be: a channel of transmission of Christian culture. This challenge arises from two sources. The first is the restored emphasis on general education, reversing the emphasis on specialization introduced by President Charles William Eliot of Harvard (1869-1909). The second is the repeated insistence of Christopher Dawson, English Catholic cultural historian, that the type of general (or liberal) education our times require of Catholic institutions of higher learning is one based specifically on Christian culture.

The revival of general education in American colleges is a fact. The argument for making Christian culture the bone and tissue of such education in Catholic institutions is based on an analysis of what our world needs. Since American Catholic educators will have to overcome resistance to the restoration of any type of general education at the college level before they can introduce Christian culture as an essential part of such general education, it may help if we summarize the chief stages through which the movement to restore general education itself has progressed.

REVIVAL OF LIBERAL EDUCATION

The movement toward recovery from the havoc of the elective system began during the First World War. In 1919 Columbia College of Columbia University inaugurated its now famous course in Contemporary Civilization, which Mr. Dawson cites as an example of what he is pleading for. This course is required of all freshmen and sophomores. It does not, as Mr. Dawson believes, neglect world literature, which is required of all sophomores.

In 1925 the University of Chicago began a critical study of its college program. As a result, in September, 1931 Chicago launched an entirely new college curriculum introducing general-education courses in four divisions and relegating the 40-odd departments to the graduate and professional schools.

In 1938 the American Council of Education inaugurated a study which came to be known in published form as *Cooperation in General Education*, the title of its first report issued in 1947. Other volumes followed. Twenty-five colleges and universities took part in the American Council study, representing every type of institution from every section. Only one Catholic college, St. Catherine's of St. Paul, was involved. However, Catholic colleges had not succumbed to the

Christopher Dawson, English Catholic cultural historian, has aroused considerable discussion about the urgency of making "Christian culture" the "core" of the Catholic liberal-arts curriculum ever since his "Education and Christian Culture" appeared in *Commonweal*, December 4, 1953 (reprinted in full in the *Catholic Mind* for April, 1954). Fr. Cunningham of Notre Dame gives us a backdrop for this discussion (For reprints see page 90.)

worst evils of the elective system, since they had all retained philosophy and religion as required subjects—though with many qualifications, some of them lamentable.

In 1940 the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools undertook its study of the liberal-arts college. Ninety colleges participated, of which 81 were church-related, 13 being Catholic.

Separate mention should be made of the writings of Dr. Robert M. Hutchins, who was president of the University of Chicago (1929-45) when the Chicago plan for general education was implemented. His *Higher Learning in America* (1936) made him the leader in the campaign to restore order to the American liberal-college curriculum. One might mention, of course, such predecessors as Abraham Flexner's *Universities: American, British, German* (1931) and other well-grounded complaints about what was happening to our colleges.

To conclude this highly condensed roundup of those who contributed to the restoration of the humanities to their rightful place in college education let us again turn to Harvard. Dr. Abbott Lawrence Lowell (president, 1909-33) had modified Eliot's elective system there, but otherwise Harvard had shown little of the leadership it was accustomed to give—that is, until its committee on the objectives of liberal education, appointed in 1943, published its report on *General Education in a Free Society* (1946).

This volume, which has gone through many printings, has probably done more than any other single factor to add momentum to the movement in favor of general education. Since the terms "liberal education" and "general education" are often used interchangeably, this description of the latter in the Harvard report is worth quoting:

The term, general education, is somewhat vague and colorless; it does not mean some airy education in knowledge in general (if there be such knowledge), nor does it mean education for all in the sense of universal education. It is used to indicate that part of a student's whole education which looks first of all to his life as a responsible human being and citizen; while the term, special education, indicates that part which looks to the student's competence in some occupation. . . . Clearly, general education has somewhat the meaning of liberal education, except that, by applying to high school as well as to college, it envisages immensely greater numbers of students and thus escapes the invidium which, rightly or wrongly, attaches to liberal education in the minds of some people. But if one cling to the root

meaning of liberal as that which benefits or helps to make free men, then general and liberal education have identical goals. The one may be thought of as an earlier stage of the other, similar in nature but less advanced in degree (pp. 51-2).

This interpretation of the term "general education" is now commonly accepted. At the college level, general education is what we have traditionally called liberal education.

Since the fall of 1951, entering classes at Harvard have been subject to the full general-education requirement. New courses are offered in three areas: Humanities, Social Sciences and Natural Science. Within each area, the courses are divided into two groups, termed the Elementary and the Second group. Within each group in each area a student must select one course. This adds up to a total of six required courses in general education out of the total of sixteen courses a student must complete in the four-year cycle to qualify for a bachelor's degree. In addition, General Education A (a half-year course replacing English A) and foreign-language courses must be taken by all. The Harvard College program is still predominantly elective, but with these substantial qualifications.

NEW EMPHASIS ON CHRISTIAN CULTURE

In this summary recapitulation of the progress of the general-education movement during the past generation, we have not mentioned the role of Christian culture. For long it was not made explicit, though the church-related colleges engaged in the 1940 North Central study were concerned about its place in the liberal-arts college.

Let us now turn to a distinctively Catholic phase of the general-education movement, inaugurated by the Catholic University of America. Under the leadership of Dr. Roy Deferrari, formerly dean of the Department of Classical Languages, and Rev. James M. Campbell, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, the university sponsored summer workshops annually from 1946 to 1952. The proceedings of these workshops were published. The appendix of one of them, listing the college representatives participating, runs to three and a half pages. This indicates how widespread was the interest among Catholic educators in the subject then under discussion, "Theology, Philosophy and History as Integrating Disciplines in the Catholic College of Liberal Arts." This, of course, is an important phase of Christian culture.

The Great Books program of college instruction also has connections with the role of Christian culture in general education, since some of the Great Books are Christian classics. The program itself was started under President Hutchins at Chicago in 1937. It was in that year that Stringfellow Barr and Scott Buchanan left the Midway to become president (1937-46) and dean, respectively, of St. John's College in Annapolis, where they built the liberal-arts curriculum on a specially devised Great Books system.

In 1945 Manhattan College of New York City set up a committee to evaluate its liberal-arts program. By 1949 the college had a Great Books curriculum in operation. With its emphasis on history, this Manhattan innovation is probably the closest approximation we have today to Mr. Dawson's idea of making Christian culture the heart of the Catholic liberal-arts program of studies. For this reason it might be useful briefly to indicate the content of the Manhattan curriculum (see James V. Mullaney's explanatory letter in the *Commonweal*, January 15, 1954, pp. 379-381).

Its general theme is the "Heritage of Western Civilization." This cultural heritage, to quote directly from the college bulletin, is presented according to these periods:

- 1) Greece and Rome to 410 A.D. 2) The Fall of Rome to the Renaissance, 410 to 1400. 3) The Modern World and the Age of Revolutions, 1400 to 1815. 4) The Modern and Contemporary World, 1815 to the Present (*Manhattan College Bulletin*, 1953-1954, pp. 80-81).

A Great Books program went into operation at the University of Notre Dame, too—in September, 1950—as an experiment under the title of "The General Program of Liberal Education." It follows a cycle system, with the first two years devoted to the simpler Great Books of Western civilization from ancient times to the present, and the last two years to the more difficult classics. It effects a transformation in teaching techniques by the use of the tutorial and seminar. In the latter, two instructors and a small group of students discuss the books read. At Notre Dame, as at St. John's, all students take all the courses in the program. There are no electives.

Though other Catholic colleges have introduced innovations in their liberal-arts curricula looking to greater emphasis on Christian culture, it is time to turn our attention to the work being done on a somewhat broader field. The Religious Education Association, under its relatively new general secretary, Herman E. Wornom, is conducting a series of round-table discussions during the present academic year on "The Responsibility of Higher Education for Judeo-Christian Values in American Culture." A report of the first of these discussions, held at Columbia University, November 26-27, 1954, appeared in *AMERICA* for December 11, under the title of "Desegregating religion and higher education." A similar meeting was held for the Midwestern region in Chicago, February 11-12, with a third planned for Boston. Institutions of every type are represented, by invitation.

A more specialized meeting of REA, limited to representatives invited from State-supported institutions only, is scheduled to be held at the University of Minnesota, April 25-27, to discuss "The Place of Religion in the Curricula of State Universities." Since Catholicism, Protestantism and Judaism are historic religions, they share certain religious traditions—in varying degrees, of course. The effort to find a place

for them in the academic programs of secular and even State institutions is therefore bound to revive interest in Christian culture as a part of liberal education.

One would expect church-related institutions to be most concerned about the religious emphasis in their programs of general education. These colleges formed an organization of their own in the late 'thirties. However, they soon felt that they really belonged in the Association of American Colleges and eventually moved into that body, becoming one of the standing commissions, under the title of "Commission on Christian Higher Education." Three places on this commission are always held by representatives of Catholic colleges and universities. The most effective work of this commission has been the sponsoring of panel meetings throughout the country in an attempt to answer the question, "What Is a Christian College?"

This brings us to the final stage of recent efforts to locate Christian culture in the scheme of general education. Among the institutions financially assisted by the Fund for the Advancement of Education in 1952, for the purposes of carrying on a self-study, two were Catholic. St. Francis Xavier College of Chicago had been working on the problem of general education since 1934, when it had been influenced by its neighbor on the Midway. Its self-study has been combined with plans for building a completely new plant in the southern suburbs of Chicago, where St. Francis Xavier, conducted by the Sisters of Mercy, will center an elementary school, a high school and its college, all integrated to afford a Catholic education for women from childhood to womanhood. The educational programs of all three units are being reconstructed so as to form a unified system which will recognize the new emphasis on Christian culture in general education (see O. W. Perlmutter's report in the *Commonweal*, January 29, 1954).

DAWSON'S CHALLENGE

American Catholic higher education is indebted to Christopher Dawson for challenging us to make Christian culture the heart of the liberal education we aim to give young American Catholics. Mr. Dawson's argument is rather simple, but nevertheless not easily assailable. He has put it forward in several recent, widely read articles (see, for example, his *Commonweal* article of March 19, 1954, reprinted in the *Catholic Mind* for February, 1955), as well as in the last chapter of his *Understanding Europe*.

Mr. Dawson contends that, since the Renaissance, the classical culture of Greece and Rome has (at least until fairly recently) been the heart of the curriculum of all schools attempting to give a liberal education in Western Europe and the Americas. Now that this classical culture has been dislodged and become outmoded as the groundwork of a liberal education, a suitable replacement must be found. Never in the history of education among Western nations has Christian culture formed this groundwork.

In today's world, with Christian culture attacked on all sides by secularism in its many forms, from atheistic communism to religious indifference, it must, in self-defense, be made the core of the curriculum in our colleges if Christian culture is to survive.

No Christian will question this general thesis. The first reaction of anyone who has spent his entire life in Catholic college education in this country, however, is that this is exactly what we have been trying to do for a century. Such a person feels that if we have not been imbuing our student with Christian culture, at least in spirit, we must have been completely failing in our job—a conclusion he cannot accept.

But the question is not whether we have failed, but whether we cannot, especially now that our institutions have progressed in regard to faculties, library facilities and general competence, discharge our responsibilities toward Christian culture better than in the past. This means enabling our students to become more intimately acquainted with the history of Christian culture and the saints and scholars and artists who have been its tributaries. We have much greater resources now than we ever had in the past. These increased resources, surely, carry with them greater responsibilities.

Combined with the need of shoring up the values of our civilization in the face of insidious and worldwide attack, they argue convincingly in favor of a new emphasis on Christian culture in our colleges.

The Dawson challenge: a discussion

EDITOR'S NOTE: Christopher Dawson's plea that "Christian culture" be made the basis of Catholic liberal education took off from an article on "Is there a Christian Learning?" by Rev. Leo R. Ward, C.S.C., of the University of Notre Dame in the *Commonweal* for September 25, 1953. Mr. Dawson argued that Catholic higher education in the English-speaking countries had followed a course of "adaptation to an external system" instead of establishing itself upon the foundation proper to its own traditions, namely, Christian culture. He lamented the historical fact that "for centuries higher education had been so identified with the study of one particular culture—that of ancient Greece and Rome—that there was no room left for anything else." Even the study of particular national cultures, he observed, including their history and their literature, "did not obtain full recognition until the 19th century, while the concept of Christian culture as an object of study has never been recognized at all."

In the 16 months since Mr. Dawson first broached

his proposal in the Commonweal, quite a few American Catholic intellectuals, not all of them professional educators, have been trying to "shake it down," so to speak, in order to discover exactly what the proposal involved. Not only in the pages of the Commonweal but in private correspondence, which he has graciously allowed to be circulated in mimeographed form, the eminent English Catholic cultural historian has attempted to define his position in more detail and to dispel what he considers to be misunderstandings of it on the part of critics, and perhaps even of exponents.

Rev. James M. Campbell, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences of the Catholic University of America, is among those who consider, as he shows in the first of the articles which follow, that Mr. Dawson's concept of Christian culture as a basis of liberal education has still not been reduced to manageable form. We asked Father Campbell to express his misgivings because, in the 20 years in which he has been dean at the Catholic University, he has overseen the development of a liberal-arts program aimed to implement Catholic as well as purely educational ideals of the true function of a liberal-arts college in mid-20th-century America. With this necessary "briefing," we trust that those concerned about Mr. Dawson's challenge will find Father Campbell's misgivings well worth reflecting on.

In the second of the following articles AMERICA'S

Editor-in-Chief puts together in a more informal way certain observations about the Christian-culture proposal which might interest even those whose concern with Catholic liberal education is entirely non-professional. Father Hartnett was chairman of the Committee on Freshman English at the University of Detroit in the mid-thirties when the experiment of using Newman's Idea of a University as a combined freshman-readings textbook and university-orientation course was adopted (see his "Detroit Plan for Freshmen," Journal of Higher Education, May, 1936). His observations are based on his experience, spread at intervals over a period of 16 years, teaching English, religion, sociology and political science at the University of Detroit, Xavier University (Cincinnati) and, for one semester, in the Graduate School of Fordham University.

LIKE HIS FELLOW COUNTRYMAN and fellow historian Arnold Toynbee, Christopher Dawson is often misunderstood. This commonplace hazard of the intellectual pioneer is aggravated in their case by their reluctance to give the casual reader of their popularizations and occasional pieces the foolproof context which he needs, if (short of reading all their writings) he is to understand the current stage of a theme they are still in process of developing. This explains to no small extent why Mr. Dawson's rather piecemeal revelation of exactly what his Christian-culture pro-

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positional means has occasioned a certain see-saw of assertion, correction and fuller assertion.

DIALECTICAL DETOURS

It is thus easy for one who is unfamiliar with Mr. Dawson's more comprehensive works to conclude from at least one of his articles that he believes modern culture is a more unitary and uniform thing than any culture that has preceded it. But one reaches this conclusion only to learn later that the author is acutely aware of the totally different traditions of culture currently to be found, for example, in Asia and Africa.

Is Mr. Dawson unconsciously Europe-centered when he uses the phrase "modern culture," as have been many who went through Oxford in his day? Is he forgetting the high development of modern non-Western civilizations in India and China? Or, while meaning modern European culture alone, has he failed to insert the proper qualifying adjective? Such queries naturally arise in the mind of anyone who reads critically the proposal Mr. Dawson has made about basing Catholic liberal education on "Christian culture," without knowing the full sweep of the author's writings.

Again, a first reading of at least one published lecture he gave—on Toynbee—can lead to the paradoxical conclusion that the author of *The Making of Europe*, who has himself done so much to clarify the roles Byzantium and Islam played in the formation of Western culture, has not advanced beyond the understandable innocence of Cardinal Newman a hundred years ago. It would seem that in this instance Mr. Dawson is so preoccupied with his criticism of Toynbee's cultural and religious relativism and so steeped in his own concept of what Western culture is that he neglects to preface a quotation from Newman with a warning against the Cardinal's too narrow perspective.

In short, despite impressions to the contrary, Mr. Dawson's program does not exclude the simultaneous consideration of cultures other than Christian. His proposed course in Christian culture is not necessarily to be lodged in the college here and now. He does not always maintain that such a "survey" is the dish for every college freshman. His proposal does not always seem so feasible to him as he sometimes says it is. And he is aware of what the survey course can become in the hands of an untalented teacher.

These and other details are sufficiently disposed of if we remember that educational blueprints are not Mr. Dawson's specialty, regardless of how often he has been betrayed by importunate correspondents into making specific suggestions. His abiding services thus far in the discussions which he has provoked have been his discovery and demonstration of an enormous lacuna in the accepted story of the West and his picture of the cultural plight of so many formally educated Catholics in our day. To these challenging achievements must be added his multiple

proposals for correction, especially his advocacy of an *integrative course in Christian culture to serve as the core of the curriculum in the Catholic college*. Whatever may be his latest thought on the details and feasibility of this scheme, the really important fact is that his central idea is now being seriously considered by not a few American Catholic educators. To them these remarks are primarily addressed.

LABEL AND CONCEPT

Modern historians should be grateful to Mr. Dawson for clearly establishing the inadequacy of any account of the West which fails to assess the impact on subsequent Western civilization of the thousand years after Constantine. They can easily call this millennium the period of Christian (or Catholic) culture.

As a label the phrase is excellent. But Catholic educators, stirred to new anxiety by his analysis of the dangers which confront the Catholic in the midst of a society which is progressively repudiating Christianity, need to look beneath the label to the concept of Christian culture before they consider the possibilities of this "Christian culture" period as the core of the college curriculum. For unless that period included some cultural factor for living out the life of the gospel which is not equally potent among us, then the reason it commands our attention at the college level today is not that we are Catholics, but that we share equally with non-Catholics the obligation of

knowing the role of this period in shaping contemporary civilization. In this respect its significance is like that of any other part of our heritage, Christian or non-Christian.

We dare not for a moment assume that Christ is not with us as much as He was with previous generations. There is no discernible reason for believing that the Church is actually less effective today than in the last centuries before Luther. The only feature of life which, hypothetically, can be considered to have given the people of those times a spiritual advantage over ourselves is the overwhelmingly Christian environment in which they lived. But this is only an assumption. In the light of established facts about many phases of this Christian-culture period, several questions arise which cast doubt on the validity of assuming that it has a pre-eminent value as a medium of Catholic education.

Is the life of the gospel, for instance, more vigorous in a friendly than in a hostile environment? Do not our improved means of communication—auditory, visual, transportational—make for enormous differences in our favor? Is it unreasonable to assume that Christianity—charity, chastity and the rest—may be better realized today among Catholics than in the Ages of Faith?

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to suggest that until scholarship has answered them, the concept of Christian culture is vague and the period of Christian culture, however excellently labeled, cannot claim a privileged title to consideration as the core of the college curriculum in America.

CHRISTIAN CULTURE AS THE CORE

But perhaps it has a title equal to that of other claimants. And so at this point it may be useful to recall what is meant by the "core" of a liberal-arts curriculum. It does not mean an Oxford honors school evoking the values of a liberal education through exclusive preoccupation with one major subject during the undergraduate years, so that this major field becomes, so to speak, the whole curriculum. It does not mean a field of concentration seeking to realize, or to strengthen, these values by learning one subject well in the last two years of college, for concentration is only one of the general-degree requirements which give the curriculum its character. By "core" is meant essentially subject matter which lies at the basis of *all* the curricular items and to which students turn sooner or later as a unifying principle, when and if they dig beneath the surface.

The only fields whose subject matter reaches thus into all other fields are, first of all, theology and philosophy, and then history in so far as it derives unity from them. American colleges which cannot officially profess theology and philosophy, or a philosophy and theology of history derived from them, try to find a substitute in a cultural unit broad enough to serve as a unifying principle for many, if not all, college courses. And since students will not turn to such subject matter unless they have been schooled in it, the study of the cultural unit, the development of the core, is begun in the freshman year.

Now a course in Christian culture could obviously qualify as an Oxford honors school, as an American field of concentration and as a course in civilization in an American college curriculum. And since it could not be a course in Christian culture unless it included Catholic theology and philosophy, it would be vastly superior as a unifying instrument to other courses in civilization.

But the title of Christian culture to consideration as the core of the curriculum would be less than that of the theology and history, from which it in part derives. And it would suffer from at least two of the other shortcomings of other courses in civilization. First, in the disparate general-degree requirements of the present American liberal-arts curriculum (each of which has its own title to inclusion), the subject matter of a Christian-culture course could not possibly become the central academic experience to which the student will increasingly refer everything else throughout his college years. For this "everything else" is not "Western" nor "Modern" nor "American" alone, nor even "Pre-Renaissance Christian." Some of it is universal; some of it, let's hope, is Oriental.

(Continued on page 73)



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Secondly, since time marches forward even on the college campus, much of the subject matter of Christian culture would be at least as strange to the American Catholic undergraduate as would be that of Western or Modern or American civilization. Hence this "core" would definitely have to be set up in the freshman year and it would have to be a survey.

CHRISTIAN CULTURE AS AN UPPER-DIVISION SURVEY

If a whole civilization (or selected representative examples of it) is in some vicarious way to be added to the experiences of underclassmen, therefore, the survey course is the inevitable device. And surveys at the lower-division level are not an unchallenged success. If Christian culture were to be substituted for Western civilization or Modern civilization—as Mr. Dawson suggests—it might in some ways be more manageable than the lifetime enterprises which are now so often compressed into the first two years of college.

But it would still be an unmanageable unit at the lower-division level, regardless of how skilfully it was planned. For it would not be honestly organized unless it wrestled with the causes of the decline and the progressive repudiation of Christian culture since the 15th century, the great cleavage in Western religion and philosophical thought which developed in the 16th century and became so marked after Descartes and Kant, the rise of modern science—its contributions, its limitations and its preliminaries, too, in the Oxford Franciscans and St. Albert.

It is obvious that significant experience of all these issues is needed by modern man. But it should be equally obvious that the place to acquire it is in the junior and senior years, when the student has developed the intellectual background and power in theology, philosophy and history to deal with them justly. In that case, however, the course is no longer the core to which everything else is referred, but rather—like concentration—a summation and crown of everything else in preparation for life beyond the campus.

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A survey of Christian culture in the junior and senior years, one may conclude, would seem to be both necessary as background and valuable as a critical and unifying experience for any student. But it would also seem that amid the realities of the curricular structure of the American college, it must give way to theology and philosophy as the core of the curriculum. Theology and philosophy do not move into the center of the stage, however, unless they are given a chance. And that chance is not facilitated by further multiplication of courses in these fields or opened up by official proclamation. The integrating role of philosophy and theology is only partially realized even by improving the ways in which they are taught.

(Continued on page 74)

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The only way in which theology and philosophy can function as the integrating core of the liberal-arts curriculum is to establish a favorable setting for them to exercise this function. And this setting has to be provided from the freshman year on, right through the four years of college. This favorable setting requires the introduction into all courses in the curriculum of objectives and methods which lead students to dig beneath the surface of the immediate subject matter into underlying issues and challenge him to relate these deeper issues to philosophy and theology. In this way, the study of Christian culture, instead of serving as the integrative core of a four-year liberal-arts experience, would play a very important, but still ancillary, role, geared to the master-disciplines of philosophy and theology.

JAMES M. CAMPBELL

A "ONE-MAN PANEL DISCUSSION" on this question of making Christian culture the "unifying element" in American Catholic colleges of liberal arts and sciences sounds anomalous enough. But if those who know a great deal more than I do about curricula will bear with me, this sort of informal dialog with my own thoughts on the subject may hit upon a helpful suggestion here and there.

LET'S START FARTHER BACK

It seems to me that the whole discussion of Chris-

topher Dawson's Christian-culture proposal got ahead of itself in his December 4, 1953 article in the *Commonweal*.

If one reads Chapter I of Mr. Dawson's *Understanding Europe* (Sheed and Ward, 1952) this becomes immediately apparent. One begins, in fact, to question the wisdom of his having addressed his proposal to Catholic college educators in the United States. For Catholic colleges in this country show relatively few—they are not immune from them, by any means, but still show relatively few—of the symptoms of the disease for which Mr. Dawson prescribes the historical study of Christian culture as a remedy. The fact that Catholic educators naturally give his prescription a sympathetic reception doesn't prove that they really needed it in the first place. It may prove exactly the opposite.

Precisely why has this world-renowned Catholic cultural historian launched his crusade in favor of the study of Europe's historic Christian culture as the basis of today's liberal education? He has explained why, very explicitly, in *Understanding Europe*.

Mr. Dawson's first concern is to save Europe itself from chaos. His purposes are similar to those of all advocates of European Union, though his aims are far deeper, far more spiritual than that project's. Basically, he is prescribing a remedy for a sick Continent.

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long story. One phase of it is nationalism. The study of Christian culture would unquestionably be a strong antidote to the virus of nationalism. It might go far, if pursued the way Mr. Dawson wants it pursued, to remind Europeans of those "values of Western civilization" (as we rather superficially call them) which Frenchmen, Germans, Italians, the Dutch and the rest have inherited from the Christian society which was Europe in the heyday of its Christian culture. The "European idea" would certainly gain momentum if Europeans, through the study of their Christian culture, would rediscover "the constitutive factors of the European community" (*op. cit.*, p. 13). We can conclude that this reason for studying Christian culture applies principally to the Continent.

Other reasons apply mostly to non-Catholic sectors of Western civilization as a whole, perhaps of this country even more than of Europe. They have to do with the complete secularization of modern education, from the cradle to the graduate school, and with other deficiencies, of which we, as Americans, are acutely aware. These include the emphasis on specialization, the rather total lack of instruction in religion, the "nationalizing" of what is taught in school systems under the control of the various nation-states—in sum, everything about modern education which has emptied it of Christian-culture elements.

To wind up this end of the discussion, we can all agree that the universalizing of education, combined with its progressive falling under state control and becoming the prey of pragmatists, has rather completely clogged the channels of transmission of Christian culture.

We know that full well. Unfortunately, neither we nor Mr. Dawson know how to reverse the secular trend of the past three centuries in the West. If those who control the policies of the National Education Association would pay any serious attention to the proposal that contact be re-established with Christian culture, they would never have led us to where we are in the first place.

Let's even agree that the Catholic educational system in the United States has, in the past and to some extent, been adversely affected by the educational environment in which it grew up. American Catholic educators have arrested these trends and (so far as I know) largely reversed them, to the degree that they can be reversed. By and large, we have kept the channels for the transmission of Christian culture fairly wide open and are in process of opening them wider all the time.

So Mr. Dawson's suggestion applies to us more as a possibly better way of doing what we are already doing, or of doing more of it, than as a proposal which is in any way revolutionary. Adopting his means of accomplishing what we are already trying to accomplish wouldn't, in any case, make much of a change in the world at large, to which the proposal is properly addressed.

(Continued on page 88)

The liberal arts: a plan of action

Michael F. Moloney

That the liberal arts are the vital core of Catholic education is a proposition few will care to controvert. That the liberal arts are in process of disintegration is a melancholy fact to the consequences of which no Catholic educator can be indifferent. To be sure, the too narrow identification of Catholicism with a particular epoch or particular aspect of human culture is a seductive fallacy to which very alert and very dedicated minds have succumbed. The essential work of the Church—the salvation of souls—can be and has been forwarded, let it be said at once, in the midst of almost total cultural aridity. But it ought also to be recognized that in the development of man's full potential, in the lifting Godward of his frequently errant and antithetical powers, a benign culture can be ancillary to his progress as well as demonstrative of his achievement.

If this is true, there ought to be unanimous agreement that the concern of Catholic thinkers with the fate of the liberal arts is more than a matter of sentimental and prideful attachment to the past. Historically, of course, the liberal culture of the Greeks and Romans became from the beginning a part of the Christian heritage. With the astute economy of true wisdom, the Church early employed the magnificent achievements of ancient classical thought as instruments for the achievement of her own divine purpose. Even educated Catholics are apt to underestimate the extent of this cultural synthesis. St. Thomas in the 13th century was breaking no new path when he incorporated Aristotle into scholastic thinking. He was repeating for the greatest of the Greek thinkers the process of classical assimilation begun in the earliest centuries—with Origen and Clement of Alexandria, with St. John Chrysostom, with St. Ambrose, and especially with St. Augustine, who in the fourth and fifth centuries completed the integration of Platonism into Christian thought.

The historic fact, then, is that the concept of liberal education as Western man knows it was first grasped by the Greeks, and by them pushed far toward ultimate realization. They asked the fundamental questions which free men in all ages will continue to ask, questions probing the nature of being, the meaning of existence, the possibility of knowledge, the relation of body and soul, of time and eternity, of vice and virtue. They developed the speculative habit and they honored the thinker above the man of af-

Michael F. Moloney is a member of the English faculty of Marquette University, Milwaukee.

LITERATURE AND ARTS

fairs. With all their love of the body, they went as far as natural man could go in exploring the realm of the spirit and in their great period they never failed to grant precedence to the spirit. Their richest bequest to subsequent generations was the tradition of the inquiring mind. For its preservation and transmission their Roman conquerors are eternally joined with them in the gratitude of mankind.

Now, for the first time in his history, Western man is faced with isolation from the source of the liberal tradition. This is an event whose significance has not, I think, been sufficiently understood. It is of particular significance to Catholics because it points at once to a danger and an opportunity.

The isolation is basically the result of a language impasse. The classical tongues, though not dead, are dying. The Christmas, 1954 number of *AMERICA* presented the results of a survey of the 550 member institutions of the Association of American Colleges conducted by Randolph-Macon Woman's College of Lynchburg, Va. The survey showed that in Greek only 50 of the 550 colleges had an enrolment of 50 or more students during the past four years. For the same period only 11 colleges had 200 or more enrolled in Latin courses. The extent of the decline is dramatized by comparison with figures for 1929, when, though there were fewer colleges, 64 had 50 or more enrolled in Greek, while 38 reported enrolments of 200 or more in Latin. Since 1929, Latin enrolments have dropped 53 per cent, Greek 20 per cent. Today 87 reporting colleges teach neither Latin nor Greek.

Few educators are unaware that, despite the vast general increase in student enrolment, the decline of the classics in Catholic colleges has proceeded apace. Indeed, the classicists in many Catholic colleges assume an almost wholly defeatist attitude. They have given up the possibility of fighting a rear-guard action preparatory to a regrouping of forces. The field is littered with matériel abandoned in full retreat.

Actually, the emergence among Catholic classicists of a rationalization of the futility of their position is in part justified by its honesty. The study of little Latin and less Greek under the artificial conditions of the classroom, with much of the effort spent on grammar-grinding and with little possibility of fruitful cultural employment of the knowledge so dearly bought, is surely an uninspiring spectacle. Nor am I,

for one, averse to waiving the justification of classical studies for their once supposedly unique disciplinary values.

But there is another ground on which I should like to plead for the preservation of the classics in Catholic education. Catholic colleges are confronted today with multitudinous problems of building and finance, but I venture to say there is no administrator worthy of the name who is not even more concerned with future faculty procurement. Whence are to come the teachers who will give to Catholic collegiate education the justifying character without which it will fade into a second-rate replica of its secular counterpart? I suspect that a satisfactory answer to that question is inseparably linked with our disposition of the classical languages.

I would, therefore, justify the study of Latin and Greek in Catholic secondary schools and colleges on the theory that only classically trained men and women can successfully impart to future generations of students the meaning of the Catholic liberal tradition. It is not that there is something magically efficacious about the classical tongues as such. But there is something inevitable about classical wisdom. The Greeks and Romans are significant today because in their patient investigation of the perennial problems which plague men's minds they came upon truth and built their enduring intellectual monuments in her honor. In the course of time, through providential direction, one must think, the truth which they isolated was incorporated into the systems of their Christian successors, and that fusion of the classical and Christian visions is the charter of Catholic liberal education.

Practically, though not ideally, it must be sufficient in the foreseeable future for the majority of Catholic college students to be introduced to this cultural tradition in their native tongue. But it certainly is not possible for teachers of scholastic philosophy to feel at ease in their field without a sound knowledge of Latin and Greek, and it is scarcely more possible for teachers of literature and history.

What especially perturbs me about the precarious status of Latin and Greek in Catholic schools is that it seems to be a casting away of one of our most precious resources. There still exist in both Catholic high schools and Catholic colleges adequately trained faculties for the intelligent teaching of the classics. At the secondary level, very likely we have the most competent and devoted groups of teachers in these subjects in the country. On the collegiate level we not only have the teaching personnel but in this area there is not, as in some others, a forbidding problem of library resources.

In this situation lies one of the great opportunities of Catholic education today, one which, properly utilized, can have an enormous impact upon not only Catholic but non-Catholic circles as well. It is no secret that the young man or woman with a sound classical training has been, for a generation, a marked

person in the graduate schools. Especially in the area of the humanities, but in other fields as well, learned professors are eager to work with young people whose secondary and undergraduate training has given them the tools to do the job of scholarship. From our Catholic high schools and colleges there could come a procession of men and women confirmed in Christian virtue and grounded in Christian liberal culture who would have it in their hearts and heads to transform the educational world.

Before this can be accomplished, however, administrators on both the secondary and collegiate levels must readjust their thinking. They have been and continue to be engrossed with projection charts which forecast ominously an engulfing human tide beating against their battlements by 1960, 1965, 1970. Their quantitative problems are immense, but somehow through grace and sacrifice and Keynesian economics they will solve them. But what of their qualitative problems? Relying on their tolerance I dare to pose a question.

Is it beyond the resources of Catholic higher education in the United States to offer 200 four-year scholarships annually to liberal-arts students majoring in the classics, the recipients to look forward to collegiate teaching careers in the field of the humanities? I choose the number 200 because there are approximately that number of Catholic four-year liberal-arts colleges now in operation. Some, of course, may find the financing of a single scholarship unfeasible. Many, doubtless, do not have adequate curricula for concentration in the classics. But the slack here might well be taken up by institutions more favorably circumstanced. I think in terms of undergraduate scholarships only. For properly trained undergraduates the pursuit of a doctoral program, because of the fellowships, scholarships and teaching assistantships available, offers no insurmountable obstacle.

I think I know enough about Catholic undergraduates to predict that there would be no dearth of capable candidates for such a program were it properly presented to them. The idealism of youth is a phenomenon which even a crusty and balding college professor cannot ignore. The challenge to prepare for leadership in the Catholic educational community and as spokesmen for Catholic culture and Catholic faith in the secular world would not go unanswered.

To be effective the program would have to be launched in the high schools, where the foundations for the scholarly disciplines must be laid. To be sure, there would be defections to the more lucrative professions. Some among these future academic leaders would doubtless be recruited by non-Catholic universities, a wholly desirable consummation. But once the program was under way, 100, or even 50, Catholic scholars, soundly trained in the classics and intimate with the bases of Catholic culture, joining annually the academic wars would have the capacity to re-create Catholic higher education. Humanly speaking, without them I do not know how it can be saved.

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BOOKS

CBC April choice

NO MAN IS AN ISLAND

By Thomas Merton. Harcourt, Brace.
264p. \$3.95

It was said of Paul Claudel that his poetry disclosed a "terrible unity." Claudel's meaning was so organic and intense that he could hardly state it in parts; he came near saying everything he had to say in everything that he did say. A similar unity of meaning, intense, burning, heroically reaching for the purest sincerity, characterizes this book of flame in which, with deeper tones and from profounder levels of the contemplative life, Thomas Merton returns to thoughts which are of absolute importance for the spiritual life of man.

His earlier book, *Seeds of Contemplation*, was, as he said, the kind of book that writes itself in the monastery. Leaving aside system and universal legislation, it dealt with the "real assents" of a practitioner. It set down reflections on varied truths, any and all of which were able to conduct him to that rich simplicity in which the real self is wholly oriented toward God in the life of the spirit.

No Man Is an Island is largely that earlier book spoken again in firmer accents, with more attention to detail, and with the explication of much that was then taken for granted. You cannot read this book in the ordinary way any more than you could take a month's food at one meal. All you can do (unless you, too, are an uncompromising searcher after God) is to suffer the agony of trying to make yourself equal to these 16 chapters, any one of which leads to the same center of flaming sincerity where the soul is willing to have God and naught beside.

That the spiritual life is the highway to real existence, Thomas Merton affirms with Christian tradition, but not merely because it is tradition. "The life of the spirit," he writes,

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thoughts with which he has nourished his own contemplative spirit and ministered to the needs of the young Trappists who have been placed under his spiritual care. And though he has declined the task of setting universal laws, everywhere his book witnesses to the Christian paradox that in order to save your life you must lose it, that only those who renounce self for the love of God may hope to live a life, even in this manifold world, which is more than an unsubstantial and illusory existence.

The title, chosen from John Donne's famous passage, plainly shows that for Thomas Merton the spiritual life is solitary but not private. It summons a man by penance and prayer, and by the sincere cultivation of truth, to discover his own identity in God; but this unrelenting search for a true identity goes on within the solidarity of all those who belong to the mystical body of Christ.

Selfishness is the antithesis of the spiritual life; it diminishes the Christian community and consigns a man to the prison of his own futility. Love can be kept only by being given away; and the act whereby a man devotes himself to God, and to God in his neighbor, is the act whereby he discovers the true name conferred on him by baptism and emerges as a real person marvelously increased by grace and his own divine unselfishness. Of this subject Thomas Merton writes with an almost painful clarity joined to a prudent realism and a refusal to spare love's counterfeits.

Through other chapters the search for spiritual life goes on as Merton shares with us his realizations of such matters as Hope, Freedom, Pure Intention, Vocation, Sincerity, Being and Doing. The names of the roads are familiar to the Christian, but in these sinewy chapters which refuse to state anything not realized by the writer, readers will find a purer light and a more poignant understanding of what is required for the liberation of the real self within. The words are uncompromising, but they are written in this world; they take account of human weakness with a truly Christlike compassion.

"It is better to find God on the threshold of despair" (the words will be welcomed by many) "than to risk our lives in a complacency that has never felt the need of forgiveness."

In choosing *No Man Is an Island* as its April selection, the Catholic Book Club seems to this reviewer to have happily chosen a major work of spirituality, one which puts the true challenge of life in its most inspiring and provocative terms.

FREDERICK A. HARKINS, S.J.

Of interest to educators and parents



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Challenge to liberal education

ACCENT ON TEACHING: Experiments in General Education

Edited by Sidney J. French. Harper. 334p. \$4.75

Both title and subtitle are important in this book. The editor and most of the contributors follow the Instrumentalist philosophy as outlined by Harold Taylor of Sarah Lawrence College in the 51st Yearbook, Part I, of the National Society for the Study of Education, under the title of "General Education" (1952).

Taylor distinguishes Instrumentalist general education from both what he calls the rationalist (absolute truths about the nature of man, etc.) and the neo-humanist (unity from the tradition of Western culture; general education prior to and corrective of specialism). Instrumentalism, instead, rejects absolutes, minimizes subjects and the past, and centers attention on man as a social animal: his needs, problems, adjustment.

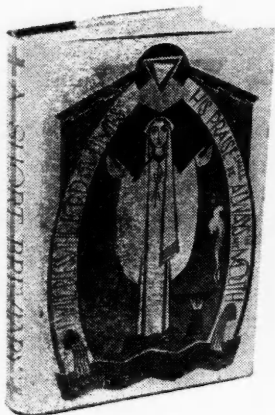
The success of the Instrumentalist approach, says Prof. French, depends mainly on skilful teaching rather than on "proper subjects for training the mind." Hence the title: *Accent on Teaching*. But all education, whatever its philosophical orientation, accents teaching. The classic treatise on this is St. Thomas Aquinas' *De Magistro*, which is one of the volumes of the Great Books Foundation.

Unlike the Instrumentalists, however, St. Thomas believed that *what* is taught is of comparable importance to *how* it is taught; and this points up the fundamental flaw in all "progressive" and Instrumentalist tactics, to wit, setting up pairs of concepts which necessarily complement each other (body and soul, experience and subject matter, play and work, how and what, freedom and authority) and then wiping out the second member in favor of the first.

The 18 papers on "Experiments in General Education" gathered here by Prof. French emphasize student interests, techniques of class discussion, integration, social problems, life values, evaluation. Their titles are instructive: "Developing a Course in Life Values," "Integration of the Arts," "Biology in Responsible Living," "Developing a Course in Social Science," "Discussion before Writing." An excellent paper, "Evaluation as an Aid to Instruction," competently discusses both the essay and the objective test.

Though occasionally there is too much insistence in these chapters on the contemporary scene, on "functional meaning" and on "group judgment,"

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nevertheless the experiments described and evaluated are in the main interesting and significant.

Colleges which still offer only pre-specialization courses in mathematics and the sciences, and force freshmen to sit down to a warmed-over fare called Freshman English, will have a lot to learn from this book—for instance, the art of winning faculty and interdepartmental cooperation in devising, carrying out and assessing experimental courses and programs; how to break through solid departmental walls; how to set up a new course; the relation to skilful teaching of accurate objectives discussed and understood by a department; how to use the problem and case method; the art of making the past relevant to the present.

Perhaps all this is a way of saying that though the general-education movement is sometimes brash, and its philosophy in some cases a denial of the very concept of liberal education, none the less it is alive, serious in its attempt to arouse students to an interest in education, and often very humble, honest, dedicated, farsighted. In its virtues it is a challenge which traditional liberal education must not take lightly.

ALLAN P. FARRELL

To guard a precious right

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

By Russell Kirk. Regnery. 210p. \$3.75

Mr. Kirk designates his work an "exploratory essay." He is a trifle too modest. For if he has not said the last word on a subject of importance, he has at least made a contribution of enduring value. There has been much confused speculation, both within and without the nation's institutions of learning, about the nature and the limits of academic freedom. Mr. Kirk's book dissipates much of the confusion.

Before writing this work, he perused practically all of the literature in English on the subject. He communicated with a number of other scholars and visited several colleges and universities. He himself was a professor at a large State college in the Middle West until he resigned in protest at the deliberate lowering of standards in order to attract more students.

Academic freedom, declares Mr. Kirk, can be conceived only in relation to the teacher's obligation to truth. The teacher's mission is to serve truth. And in fulfilling that mission he must be secured from the hazards that may arise to hamper him. That is the essence of academic freedom. It is a specific kind of freedom. It is sanctioned, not by positive law, but by custom and moral prescription.



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The modern school is indebted to the medieval universities for the tradition of academic freedom, Mr. Kirk declares. The medieval scholar was, and knew that he was, the Bearer of the Word. For this reason, his freedom to conserve and expand knowledge was respected. He enjoyed freedom, not in spite of, but because of, his dedication to Christian truth. The author has little patience with the academician who argues that freedom can be assured only in an atmosphere of skepticism.

Extremists on the subject of academic freedom will find no comfort in Mr. Kirk's volume. A salient feature of the work is its sane and principled moderation. William F. Buckley Jr. is censured for virtually dismissing academic freedom as a fetish in his *God and Man at Yale*. The "social



reconstructionists" (i.e., John Dewey and some of his followers) would bend the university and the scholar wholly to the demands of mass democracy. At the other end of the scale are the "doctrinaire liberals," among whom he includes Henry Steele Commager and Robert M. Hutchins. They would confuse liberty and license by practically emancipating the professor from all restraints.

The scholar has a right to express his political opinions, but he has no right to subvert the foundations of society. Fully aware of the abuses that can arise from state investigation of subversion in academic life, Mr. Kirk believes that circumstances may sometimes warrant such official inquiries. He makes the same cautious judgment about loyalty oaths. He is resolutely opposed to the "scatter-shot" method of rooting out suspects from the universities.

Academic freedom is a precious right and a sacred heritage, in Mr. Kirk's opinion. But he asks whether schools and teachers will continue to deserve it. Academic freedom cannot be dissociated from the dignity of the academy. He finds that dignity being undermined by a number of influences today: by the sophist, who glories in his rejection of transcendental truth, by the lowering of academic standards, by the introduction of frivolities into the curriculum. He is not despairing, however. He believes there are still enough dedicated men in the universities to provide some hope. But he likewise believes that the time for the necessary reforms is running short.

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By Paul K. Crosser. Philosophical Library. 238p. \$3.75

Mr. Crosser's thesis is that John Dewey's extreme relativism leads to the destruction of all philosophy. To substantiate this viewpoint he analyzes three volumes in which Dewey's relativistic position is most systematically and fully expressed: *Logic, the Theory of Inquiry, Art as Experience and Experience and Education*. Mr. Crosser justifies his choice of these works, which Dewey wrote during the later years of his life, with the assertion that Dewey's other writings are only fragmentary statements or preliminary exercises.

According to Mr. Crosser, Dewey's initial error was in leaving "the broad highways of reasoning which had been charted by Descartes, Spinoza and Locke" to follow the slippery paths blazed by John Stuart Mill. Dewey swept away much of the philosophical debris which impeded the progress of American thought, but failed to provide a constructive program. Mr. Crosser does not attempt to offer such a program.

The philosophy of John Dewey, in Mr. Crosser's view, substitutes the propagation of nothingness for science, art and education. It leads to the dissolution of the natural and social sciences, the reduction of esthetic to non-esthetic factors, the removal of educational content from educational experience and the exclusion of the school as a social institution.

Each of John Dewey's three works is discussed page by page, sentence by sentence. The result is an episodic treatment, more like a series of notes penciled in the margins of Dewey's books than a developed argument. At no time is Dewey's position fairly introduced or fully presented. A reader must hold Mr. Crosser's volume in one hand and John Dewey's in the other to follow the discussion.

There are significant omissions. For example, there is no mention of pragmatism, human nature, ethics or religion, though Dewey had much to say about these subjects. These and other omissions are partly explained by the fact that the author has limited himself to only three of Dewey's works. There is nothing in *The Nihilism of John Dewey*, however, to show that Mr. Crosser holds views on these subjects different from John Dewey's.

The style is incredibly murky. The sentence structure is involved beyond need and frequently incomprehensible. Two consecutive sentences from the opening page of a chapter are typical:



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Dewey's cognitive disqualification move as applied to education constitutes a crowning of his entire disqualification drive. Dewey's cognitive disqualification of the factor of education in experience presents a rounding out of his philosophical profession, it presents a placing of a sphere of his writing which had attracted the most attention into the general cognitive stream of undifferentiation which took him a lifetime to perfect and present in his *Logic, the Theory of Inquiry*.

The Nihilism of John Dewey contains some flashes of insight into John Dewey's philosophy, but the reader has to struggle so hard to find them that the game is not worth the candle.

FRANCIS GRIFFITH

REV. FREDERICK A. HARKINS, S.J., has done advanced study in ascetical theology.

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FRANCIS E. McMAHON is a past president of the American Catholic Philosophical Association and author of *A Catholic Looks at the World*.

FRANCIS GRIFFITH is principal of Richmond Hill High School, New York.

THE WORD

And Jesus said to him, Thou hast learned to believe, Thomas, because thou hast seen Me. Blessed are those who have not seen, and yet have learned to believe. (John 20:29; Gospel for Low Sunday).

The strange yet consoling affair of Thomas, apostle and skeptic, must start again in the reflective Christian mind the whole question of supernatural faith. Faith of the religious sort is a phenomenon at once so simple that it presents no problem whatever to the nice old lady who whispers over her beads in the last pew, and so complex that it sends the theologian to bed with a headache. Even he, however, if he be a really profound theologian, will make his act of faith before he retires, on the completely sound principle that certain things are to be done whether or not one fully understands what he is doing.

To begin with, faith for the indi-

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vidual is certainly an act: an interior
 act, indeed, yet an act rather than a
 mood or a tendency or a feeling. In
 the Catholic view this act is radically
 an operation of the mind or intellect by
 which a man genuinely subscribes to
 or accepts as true a given proposition.
There are three Persons in one God.
Jesus of Nazareth is true man and true
God. Mary was a virgin before, during
and after the birth of her divine Son.
 Nothing could be more obvious than
 that no one in his right mind is going
 to claim that he thoroughly under-
 stands affirmations of this kind. Yet any
 number of calm and reasonable people
 firmly accept such declarations as
 statements of exact, unvarnished truth.
 They do so by an act of supernatural
 faith.

To accept any proposition just be-
 cause it is proposed to us is manifestly
 absurd. If it be said, *Persons most ad-
 vanced in the spiritual life will invari-
 ably be found to be dark-haired rather*
than light-haired, I will most emphat-
 ically withhold my assent to the state-
 ment despite its intrinsic fascination,
 for I fail to perceive the slightest reason
 for that declaration. So there is always
 a reason for an act of religious faith.
 I believe particular affirmations be-
 cause I have God's word for them.
 How do I know what God vouches for?
 By the divine virtue of faith, for I be-
 lieve that the one, holy, apostolic and
 Catholic Church does truly speak to
 me with God's voice.

Complicated enough. Yet it is only
 when we approach the thorny question
 of the individual man's obligation to
 make an act of supernatural faith that
 we plunge into the depths of this mys-
 tery. That such an obligation exists
 stands beyond doubt. *And He said to*
them, Go out all over the world, and
preach the gospel to the whole of crea-
tion; he who believes and is baptized
will be saved; he who refuses belief
will be condemned.

With these unequivocal words of
 Christ our Lord ringing in our ears,
 we look with something like fright at
 the contemporary world about us. We
 think of all the teeming millions who
 have never had the gospel preached
 to them. Much more, we think of all
 those earnest, good-living, high-
 minded neighbors of ours who do not
 share our faith. Quietly, then, Holy
 Mother Church whispers in our ear:
 "Remember, lucky man, that faith is
 a gift; a free gift of God."

One glimpses something of the cause
 for that theological headache. Above
 all, two immediate and urgent conclu-
 sions would seem to follow for any-
 one who enjoys the gift of faith: the
 necessity for bottomless gratitude and
 the duty of genuine tolerance.

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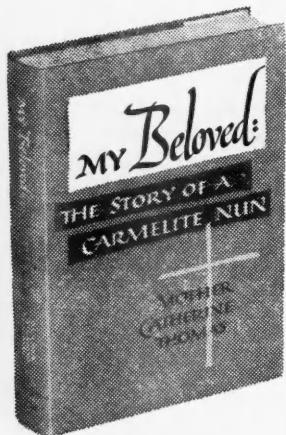
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Dawson challenge

(Continued from page 76)

If the Dawson proposal was made primarily in view of deficiencies prevalent in secular colleges and universities, the next question is: has it any relevance to American Catholic liberal education?

MEANING OF "CULTURE"

Before attempting to reply to this question we must make sure that we correctly identify what he means by the term "Christian culture." He does not mean the study of Christian theology, philosophy, social teaching and their application as a systematized body of truth, the way these are today studied in American Catholic colleges. He means by Christian culture the *historical era* in which Catholicism grew into and persisted as a total social system known as Christendom, say from about the year 300 A.D. to about 1500 A.D. Naturally, this complex society was a mixture of heterogeneous and changing elements, many of which can be characterized as "Christian" only in the sense that they emerged in a Europe whose people were all Catholic and hence presumably were influenced in all they did by Catholic religious beliefs and ideals. No one knows better than Mr. Dawson that this vast complex of thought and behavior, of events and institutions, overruns the boundaries of any college "subject" or "course." Hence he would focus the study of this period on what he calls the "constitutive factors" which gave it unity.

Another thing. I must question his analogy between "classical culture" and "Christian culture" as bases of liberal education. In this country, my impression is that we studied the "classics" (mostly parts of individual writings of individual ancient authors) but never classical culture as a unified whole. The British have done it. But the analogy is mostly inapplicable to American Catholic college education.

Whenever anyone urges us to put more emphasis on "Christian culture" in our colleges, he strikes a responsive chord. We all want nothing more than to make our colleges more and more truly Catholic. If we are now leaving anything undone which we could feasibly do to make them more Catholic, we are all ears. This is to our credit.

MEANS AND ENDS

Yet our eagerness to make our colleges as Catholic as we can should not make us uncritical of proposals just because they are made in the name of "Christian culture." Fields of study in our colleges are all means to the ends we are pursuing. We must evaluate their worth not so much in terms of in-



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intrinsic merit as of suitability as means to achieve certain ends.

It would take too long to try to delineate the kind of person we are trying to produce in our liberal-arts colleges. For the sake of brevity we can even pass over the plain fact that college administrators do not have complete control of their educational objectives. Both the students and their parents have their own ideas about what values a college education should provide. At best we can only strike a balance between what we would like to teach and what our students want to learn.

Everybody would agree that we have to work on two levels, the natural and the supernatural. It is also generally agreed among us that a liberally educated young man or young woman should, at least ideally, know something about the methods and contents of theology, philosophy, the natural sciences, the social sciences, mathematics, literature and history. We differ fairly widely among ourselves on questions of emphasis. Finally, in addition to these general-education requirements, we must provide a "core" of learning which will integrate everything else into a meaningful unity, and a field or fields of "concentration" to ensure depth as well as breadth to the student's academic experience.

It is not obvious to me, I confess, exactly what role the study of Christian culture, as Mr. Dawson envisages it, is supposed to play in this highly articulated four-year program of intellectual development.

USES OF HISTORY

On the other hand, I think we badly need to add the historical dimension to the systematic study of such subjects as theology, philosophy (where we are now adding it) and the social sciences. To be specific, it seems to me that an hour's lecture on the way our thesis in ethics on the natural right of private property has emerged through 20 centuries of Christian thought would give it a much fuller meaning. What I would call "excursions" into Christian culture in this way would give a much better rounded out understanding of genuinely Christian ideas.

One-sided reliance on systematic doctrinal instruction often leads to an excessively narrow grasp of truth. Catholicism has been hospitable to glimpses of truth our students never hear about.

This is only saying that the historical dimension of any subject is integral to a complete understanding of it. At the same time I feel that, for our purposes, it is more important to inculcate, as we now do, the *body of truths*, the habits of mind, the outlook we call "Catholic" than to study the genealogy

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of these truths, habits and outlook. This, I am afraid, is where Mr. Dawson and I part company. My concept of the kind of person we are trying to produce seems to differ from his.

WHAT WE CAN DO

Where do we go from here? I'd favor a good deal of flexibility in experimenting with this undoubtedly fruitful suggestion of accenting Christian culture in our curricula. If a college has someone who could do it, why shouldn't it try to substitute for its present course in Western civilization, let's say, even a freshman survey in which the essential historical facts of that course were subordinated to, and presented somewhat in terms of, Mr. Dawson's "constitutive factors" of Western culture? Why shouldn't another college experiment with Father Campbell's idea of making Christian culture an area of upper-division concentration? And why cannot every college and every teacher "lick in" Christian-culture elements in every course where they would help to illuminate the subject matter he is teaching?

But what seems to me to be of great-est urgency is the establishment of graduate Institutes of Christian Culture in a few of our Catholic universities. These could be small. Their function would be twofold: first, to work up this field to a point where it could be reduced to the dimensions of a survey or pursued as an area of concentration; and secondly, to form a storehouse from which elements of Christian culture could be larded into other courses.

DIFFERENCES ELUCIDATE

Mr. Dawson, through his many volumes, is probably already having more influence on our college students than he realizes. He will, I hope, have a great deal more. If we do not see eye to eye all along the line, the reason, I think, is that he is an English Catholic cultural historian and I am an American Catholic priest, political scientist and editor. Our "cultures" are sufficiently different to give rise to different outlooks, different focusing-points. This will not surprise so generous an intellectual as Christopher Dawson. For he himself has written:

In history as in other branches of knowledge there must inevitably be controversy and difference of opinion on a thousand points. But the justification of such conflicts is that they elucidate and do not obscure or obstruct (*op. cit.*, p. 23).

Out of deference to so great a scholar, I sincerely hope our differences are thus justified.

ROBERT C. HARTNETT, S.J.

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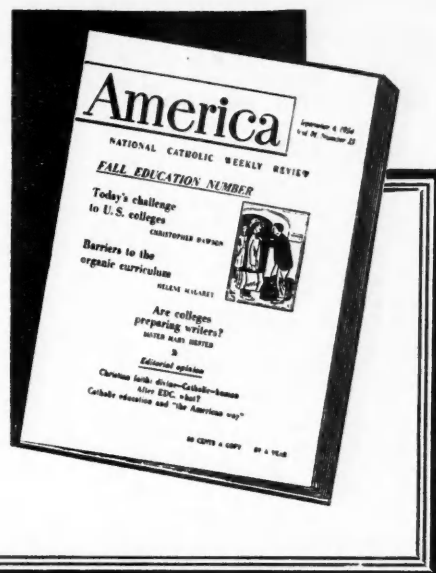
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CORRESPONDENCE

Dance at Catholic colleges

EDITOR: In Current Comment (3/26, p.664) you mention the article in *Jubilee* which describes the Modern Dance course at St. Joseph's College for Women in Brooklyn, N. Y. Perhaps I misinterpreted your comment, but I was surprised to find you speaking of such a program as something new.

Let me give specific examples, just from my own experience. Chestnut Hill College began a Modern Dance program when the college opened in 1924, and has continued to offer courses in dance since that time. Our requirements for completion of credit in physical education include dance, a team sport, an individual sport and swimming.

The College of St. Catherine in St. Paul, Minn., had Modern Dance instruction as part of its well-balanced program when I taught there over fifteen years ago. When I went to Trinity College in 1941 I found that the exceptional quality of their Modern Dance program was well known in the Washington area.

So please give the Catholic women's colleges, as a whole, credit for offering physical-education programs which are in keeping with the liberal-arts education of women.

(MISS) BETTY BUCKLEY
Director, Physical
Education Department

Chestnut Hill College
Philadelphia, Pa.

Largest Catholic colleges

EDITOR: Re your Comment "Largest Catholic colleges in the United States" (Am. 4/2, p.4). The University of Dayton was very much misrepresented when you gave the number attending part-time as only 25%.

The University of Dayton's basketball publication, the *Hit Parade*, published for press, radio and television for 1954-55, gives the following statistics: day students, 2,525; part-time students, 1,800; giving a total of 4,325 students. This would rank the University of Dayton in fifth place among non-Jesuit Catholic colleges in full- and part-time enrolment.

According to official estimates, the University of Dayton ranks among the top five U. S. institutions of higher learning—both Catholic and non-Catholic—in the matter of rapid growth.

(BRO.) RAYMOND GLEMET, S.M.
St. Joseph High School
Cleveland, Ohio

(Our correspondent is substantially right. The University of Dayton sent us very complete enrolment statistics, one page of which read: "Part-time, 257; Full-time, 2,151; Total, 2,408." We failed to notice that an evening enrolment of 1,558 was separately recorded and not included in any over-all total. So Dayton's combined full- and part-time total as of February, 1955, was 3,966. It therefore noses out Duquesne University — which showed 3,879—for fifth place in combined enrolment. We apologize. And very many thanks. Ed.)

EDITOR: DE PAUL REGISTRAR CONFIRMS FULL TIME ENROLMENT GIVEN YOU WAS 3005 NOT 2005 AS STATED IN APRIL SECOND AMERICA. DE PAUL THEREFORE SHOULD RANK THIRD IN FULL TIME LIST. ARTHUR J. SCHAEFER
PUBLIC RELATIONS
DE PAUL UNIVERSITY, CHICAGO, ILL.

(The reply we received from De Paul under date of Jan. 8 plainly totals resident full-time students at 2,005, the figure we gave. However, this was a typographical error we should have detected, since it was supposed to be the result of adding 2,228 men and 777 women. The correct order of full-time enrolments is therefore: Notre Dame (5,406), St. John's (3,377), De Paul (3,005), Seton Hall (2,656), Catholic U. (2,247), and Dayton (2,151), with Duquesne (2,090), ranking seventh. So far as we know, no official listing of full- and part-time enrolments in U. S. Catholic colleges and universities is available. Ed.)

Correction and addition

EDITOR: It could happen to any magazine to have a misprint. You have a misprint in your issue of March 26 which I noticed because it affected me.

In "Underscorings," the price of one copy of *Local Leadership in Mission Lands* (Fordham Univ. Press) is quoted as \$10. The true state of affairs: individual copies are priced at \$2; lots of 10 or more cost \$1.50 per copy.

Now that I have your ear, may I remark that this book, and *The Training of Converts*, the proceedings of the 1953 Fordham University Conference of Mission Specialists (same press, same prices), are chock-full of good reading for apostolic people?

(REV.) J. FRANKLIN EWING, S.J.
Fordham University
Bronx, N. Y.

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At the NCEA Convention in Atlantic City, April 12-15, meet the MESSENGER editors personally at our exhibit.

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